

REMARKS

The Examiner has rejected Claims 1-27 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by McAndrew et al. (USPN 5,517,405), filed: October 14, 1993, and issued May 14, 1996. Applicant respectfully disagrees with such rejection, especially in view of the amendments set forth hereinabove. Specifically, applicant has amended each of the independent claims to include the subject matter of former dependent Claim 8-12.

In the previous action, the Examiner has relied upon the following excerpts of McAndrew to make a prior art showing of the subject matter of Claims 8-12.

"A problem solving expert system is provided which is particularly useful in managing the health care of individual patients. A description of a problem (e.g., medical condition) and a proposed solution therefor (e.g., medical procedure) is entered via a user interface. A topical library is searched to identify information relevant to the problem and proposed solution. Access to the identified information is available in either a full text or synopsis format, to assist a user in assessing the appropriateness of the proposed solution. An inference engine provides a recommendation to the user as to the appropriateness of the proposed solution based on information entered via the user interface and rules associated with the inference engine. A user can interact with the inference engine in either a structured or guided mode. The structured mode is directed to inexperienced users and dynamically generates questions in response to previous answers provided by the user to enable the inference engine to make its recommendation. The guided mode is directed to experienced users and provides a predefined questionnaire enabling the user to decide which questions to answer in order to obtain a recommendation." (See Abstract)

"The present invention provides an "expert" computer system for use in assessing proposed solutions to problems. The invention is particularly well suited to the comprehensive management of the health care of individual patients. It is also useful in virtually any other field of endeavor, including the management of industrial processes, design engineering, research and development, education, and any other task in which a problem needs to be solved and one or more available solutions needs to be assessed in order to solve the problem.

A particular advantage of the system disclosed herein is that different user levels are accommodated. For example, a beginning user will need more structure in order to effectively interact with the expert system. In such a case, the system generates a questionnaire "on the fly," as the user is responding to previously asked questions. If the user asks for a recommendation from the expert system before all of the necessary information has been determined, the system will generate additional questions until all necessary information has been obtained. For more advanced users, a guided mode of operation is provided in which a predefined form is dynamically created based on an initial problem statement (e.g., medical diagnosis and proposed treatment) entered by the user. Information provided in the problem statement is used to index various questions or question categories maintained in a database. The appropriate questions are then retrieved and assembled into a questionnaire for display to the user. The advanced user then completes those areas of the questionnaire that he or she knows are necessary to obtain a recommendation from the system as to the validity of a proposed solution. In applications where the system is used for managing health care, a "problem" to be solved can comprise a medical condition or diagnosis for which it is necessary to find a treatment, and the solution to be assessed can comprise a proposed treatment for the medical condition.

The system also provides users with a vast array of information which is useful and/or necessary in order to understand the problem presented and the proposed solution. Again, in the health care management application, such information can comprise medical journal publications, medical terminology definitions, clinical guidelines, and acceptable treatments for the condition under consideration. In accordance with the present invention, such

information can be presented to the user in either an abridged ("synopsis") or unabridged ("information") form." (col. 5, line 50 - col. 6, line 29)

Simply nowhere in such excerpt is there any disclosure, teaching and/or suggestion of "collecting data, wherein the data includes (i) policies that form boundary conditions associated with the decision logic, (ii) strategic decisions to be made, (iii) values that are important to the user, (iv) uncertainties that impact the values, and a relationship between (i)-(iv)." Still yet, there is no disclosure, teaching and/or suggestion of "creating a strategy table using the data," as well as "assessing the uncertainties for analysis purposes." Even still, there is no disclosure, teaching and/or suggestion of "generating a tornado diagram and decision sensitivity output displays," "wherein the decision logic provides a hybrid strategy."

Applicant contends that such novel combination of features provides an advanced collaborative decision platform capable of collecting a more enhanced set of data, and using such specific data to provide better analytics, for providing potential feasible hybrid themes in the improved manner claimed. A specific prior art showing of the foregoing limitations or a notice of allowance is respectfully requested.

To further distinguish the presently claimed invention, applicant has further amended the claims to further emphasize the following features which are believed to be patentable:

"wherein an application interface provides an interface between the application and the collaborative decision platform, whereby (b)-(d) are carried out using universal modules capable of interfacing with different applications" (see Claims 8 and 21)

"wherein a database interface provides an interface between the database and the collaborative decision platform" (see Claims 98 and 22)

"wherein each column heading in the strategy table includes a strategic decision from a decision hierarchy with alternatives for a decision arranged therebeneath" (see Claims 10 and 23)

"wherein the tornado diagram identifies sources of significant risk in each of a plurality of alternative strategies and the decision sensitivity output displays identify sources of significant value in each of the alternative strategies" (see Claims 11 and 24)

"defining a minimum set of attributes; receiving first information regarding each of the minimum set of attributes from a receiving business; receiving second information regarding proposed products or services in terms of the minimum set of attributes, wherein the second information is received from a supplying business; executing a decision process based on the first information and the second information as to which products or services is suitable for the receiving business" (see Claims 12 and 25)

A specific prior art showing of the foregoing limitations or a notice of allowance is respectfully requested.

In the event a telephone conversation would expedite the prosecution of this application, the Examiner may reach the undersigned at (408) 505-5100. For payment of the fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, the Commissioner is authorized to charge such fees to Deposit Account No. 50-1351 (Order No. STRATP001).

Respectfully submitted,
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